

Eco-Label Decoder

Ever wondered what all the various acronyms, logos, certifications, and seals of approval around Green products actually mean? Here's a useful eco-label jargon decoder.



FSC – Forest Stewardship Council: The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) is an international non-profit organization founded in 1993 to support environmentally appropriate, socially beneficial, and economically viable management of the world's forests. FSC accredited certification bodies are required to evaluate all forests aiming for certification according to the FSC Principles and Criteria for Forest Stewardship. Purchasing forest products carrying the FSC logo promotes forest management that meet these internationally recognized Principles and Criteria.



Rainforest Alliance: The Rainforest Alliance is a leading international conservation organization. The Rainforest Alliance is involved in various standards development and certification programs, including sustainable agriculture, forestry and tourism. It is recognized as setting the standard of the Sustainable Agriculture Network and is a founding member of the Forest Stewardship Council.



Fairtrade -FLO International: Fair-trade standards for social responsibility set by FLO establishes a clear minimum and developmental criteria and objectives for social, economic, and environmental sustainability, including wages, working conditions, and the rights of workers. Fairtrade Labeling Organizations International (FLO), established in 1997, is an association of 20 Labeling Initiatives that promote and market the Fairtrade Certification Mark in their countries.



Cradle to Cradle: While many certifications in the market address one aspect of a product or its production, the Cradle to Cradle Certified Product Standard addresses five quality categories relating to human and environmental health. In order to achieve certification, a product must meet the requirements for a given level in all five categories. The Cradle to Cradle Certified Product Standard evaluates products and their manufacturers based on achievement in 5 categories:

1. **Material Health** - *Products are made with materials that are safe and healthy for humans and the environment*
2. **Material Reutilization** - *Products are designed so all ingredients can be reused safely by nature or industry*
3. **Renewable Energy and Carbon Management** - *Products are assembled and manufactured with renewable, non polluting energy*
4. **Water Stewardship** - *Products are made in ways that protect and enrich water supplies*
5. **Social Fairness** - *Products are made in ways that advance social and environmental justice*



USDA Organic: USDA's National Organic Program regulates the standards for any farm, wild crop harvesting, or handling operation that wants to sell an agricultural product as organically produced.



IFOAM – Organic: The International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) is an umbrella organization of the organic agriculture movement founded in 1972 with approximately 750 member organizations in 100 countries around the world. IFOAM's goal is the worldwide adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound systems that are based on the Principles of Organic Agriculture.



Certified Humane Raised & Handled: Humane Farm Animal Care (HFAC) is the leading non-profit certification organization dedicated to improving the lives of farm animals in food production from birth through slaughter. The goal of the program is to improve the lives of farm animals by driving consumer demand for kinder and more responsible farm animal practices. The Certified Humane Raised and Handled® label



signifies that the food products have come from facilities that meet precise, objective standards for farm animal treatment.



The U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC): To transform the way buildings and communities are designed, built and operated, enabling an environmentally and socially responsible, healthy, and prosperous environment that improves the quality of life. **LEED** (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) certifications are overseen by this council.



Greenguard Environmental Institute: The Greenguard Environmental Institute is an industry-independent organization that aims to protect human health and improve quality of life by enhancing indoor air quality and reducing people's exposure to chemicals and other pollutants.



Green Seal: Develops life cycle-based sustainability standards for products, services and companies and offer third-party certification for those that meet the criteria in the standard. Green Seal has been actively identifying and promoting sustainability in the marketplace, and helping organizations be greener since 1989.

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Design for the Environment: EPA's Design for the Environment program helps consumers, businesses, and institutional buyers identify cleaning and other products that perform well, are cost-effective, and are safer for the environment. DfE logo on a product it means that the DfE scientific review team has screened each ingredient for potential human health and environmental effects and that—based on currently available information, EPA predictive models, and expert judgment—the product contains only those ingredients that pose the least concern among chemicals in their class.



Energy Star: Established at the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as a voluntary program to identify and promote energy-efficient products and buildings in order to reduce energy consumption, improve energy security, and reduce pollution through voluntary labeling of or other forms of communication about products and buildings that meet the highest energy efficiency standards.



Sierra Club: Founded by legendary conservationist John Muir in 1892, the Sierra Club is largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization -- with more than two million members and supporters. Successes range from protecting millions of

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acres of wilderness to helping pass the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, and Endangered Species Act. Currently, the Sierra Club is leading the charge to move away from the dirty fossil fuels that cause climate disruption and toward a clean energy economy.



WaterSense: WaterSense, a partnership program by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, seeks to protect the future of our nation's water supply by offering people a simple way to use less water with water-efficient products, new homes, and services.



The Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS): The world's leading processing standard for textiles made from organic fibers. It defines high-level environmental criteria along the entire organic textiles supply chain and requires compliance with social criteria as well.



Green Goodhousekeeping Seal: The Green Good Housekeeping Seal was introduced in 2009 by Good Housekeeping magazine and the Good Housekeeping Research Institute (GHRI). It was developed to help consumers sift through the confusing clutter of "green" claims on hundreds of products on store shelves today.

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GoodWeave: GoodWeave™ works through its certification program to end illegal child labor in the carpet industry and to offer educational opportunities to children in South Asia. GoodWeave was founded on a simple premise: If enough people demand certified child-labor-free rugs, manufacturers will employ only skilled, adult artisans, and children will no longer be exploited in the carpet industry.



World Wide Fund for Nature: WWF's mission is to stop the degradation of our planet's natural environment, and build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature. In order to achieve this mission, WWF focuses its efforts on two broad areas: First, to ensure that the earth's web of life - **biodiversity** - stays healthy and vibrant for generations to come. WWF strategically focuses on conserving **critical places** and **critical species** that are particularly important for the conservation of the earth's rich biodiversity. Second, to reduce the negative impacts of human activity - or **ecological footprint**. WWF is working to ensure that the natural resources required for life -land, water, air - are managed sustainably and equitably.

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Marine Stewardship Council – Certified Sustainable Seafood: Utilizes their own eco-label and fishery certification program to contribute to the health of the world's oceans by recognizing and rewarding sustainable fishing practices, influencing the choices people make when buying seafood, and working with partners to transform the seafood market to a sustainable basis.



Leaping Bunny Program: The Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics' (CCIC) administers a cruelty-free standard and the internationally recognized Leaping Bunny Logo for companies producing cosmetic, personal care, and household products. The Leaping Bunny Program provides the best assurance that no new animal testing is used in any phase of product development by the company, its laboratories, or suppliers.



Veriflora: The Veriflora Certified Sustainably Grown label is your guarantee that flowers and potted plants have been produced in an environmentally and socially responsible manner and with high quality standards.

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